

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(b)(3), the Substitute Specification (including the Abstract, but without the claims) contains no new matter. The amendments reflected in the Substitute Specification (including Abstract) are to conform the Specification and Abstract to U.S. Patent and Trademark Office rules or to correct informalities. As required by 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(b)(3)(iii) and § 1.125(b)(2), a Marked Up Version Of The Substitute Specification comparing the Specification of record and the Substitute Specification also accompanies this Preliminary Amendment. Approval and entry of the Substitute Specification (including Abstract) is respectfully requested.

The underlying PCT Application No. PCT/EP99/08225 includes an International Search Report, mailed April 4, 2000. The Search Report includes a list of documents that were uncovered in the underlying PCT Application. A copy of the Search Report accompanies this Preliminary Amendment.

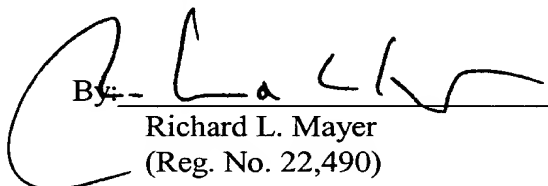
The underlying PCT application also includes an International Preliminary Examination Report, dated March 23, 2001, and annexes. An English translation of the International Preliminary Examination Report and the annexes thereto, accompany this Preliminary Amendment.

Applicants assert that the subject matter of the present application is new, non-obvious, and useful. Prompt consideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Dated: 7/2/01

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